

In other words, abducted American children are not coming home from these countries and American families need other options.

The same is true for many countries that have not signed the Hague Convention. In 2012 alone, more than 634 children were abducted to countries that have not signed the Hague Convention—countries like Japan, Egypt, and India.

More than 300 children have suffered abduction from the United States to Japan since 1994. Congress does not know of a single case in which the Government of Japan has issued and enforced an order for the return of an abducted child to the United States. According to U.S. State Department statistics, the United States is monitoring 54 ongoing cases involving 74 children who were abducted from the United States to Japan and 21 additional children from the United States who may not have been abducted, but who are being denied access to their American parent.

Although Japan has recently taken steps to join the Hague Convention, Japan's ratification will not address current cases for return. Moreover, experts question whether the ratification includes reservations that will make it impossible for even new abduction cases to be resolved with returns.

The United States does not have a bilateral or other agreement with Japan to facilitate the return of American citizen children who are currently abducted—citizens like Jade and Michael Elias, whose father will testify before us today.

Under the Convention alone, if ratified by Japan, the best that American parents of currently abducted children can hope for is a visit with their child. Such visits are projected to be one hour long, once a month, in a secure facility—hardly dignified or unfettered.

Despite our multi-billion dollar investment in Egypt, neither the Mubarak government nor the Morsi government has seen fit to return abducted American citizen children Noor and Ramsey Bower. They, along with 30 other American children in Egypt, are forced to live without half of their culture, half of their identity, and without the love and guidance of an American parent who daily fights for their return. The United States does not have a bilateral agreement with Egypt to facilitate the return of American citizen children, and has so far been unwilling to make prioritization of these cases a condition for the continued funding of the Egyptian Government.

India also has been a source of immense frustration and grief for American parents. In 2012, 32 more children were abducted to India, bringing the total number to 78 open abduction cases involving 95 children. Although some Indian courts make "Hague-like" decisions to return some children, returns are uneven. Parents attempting to utilize India's courts for the return of abducted children report corruption and incessant delays. The United States does not have a bilateral agreement with India to facilitate the return of American citizen children Convention.

In the last Congress I introduced legislation—the Sean and David Goldman Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act—to impress upon both Hague and non-Hague Convention countries that the United States will not tolerate child abduction or have patience with countries that hide abductors behind the Hague Convention. The bill would empower

the President and Department of State with new tools and authorities to secure the return of abducted American children.

When a country has shown a "pattern of non-cooperation" in resolving child abduction cases, the President will be able to respond decisively with a range of 18 actions and penalties. Based on past experience—particularly with the Goldman case in Brazil—we know that penalties manage to get the attention of other governments, and help them prioritize resolution.

The bill also calls for the State Department to work out memorandums of understanding with countries that have not signed the Hague Convention in order to create agreed-upon routes to abduction resolution between countries, rather than the never-ending and torturous maze American are currently forced to run.

The status quo is simply not adequate, while well meaning and sincere, current policy has failed far too many children and their left behind, broken hearted, parents. To combat the cruelty and exploitation of human trafficking, over a decade ago I authored the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. To tangibly assist abducted American children and their left behind parents I introduced "The Sean and David Goldman Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act" this week. The United States can and must do more to protect innocent American children and their left behind parents from the horrors of international child abduction.

IN HONOR OF THE VALLEY FORGE  
ALUMNAE CHAPTER OF DELTA  
SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.  
AND THE 20-YEAR ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE PATRIOTS OF AFRICAN  
DESCENT MONUMENT

**HON. PATRICK MEEHAN**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 16, 2013*

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the Valley Forge Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and the 20-year anniversary of the Patriots of African Descent Monument.

One hundred years ago, the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority started with 22 women at Howard University. Since then, it has grown to more than 300,000 members in 1,000 chapters worldwide. Today, more than one hundred dedicated alumna from the Valley Forge chapter live in and serve the greater Philadelphia area.

On May 18, 2013, the women of the Valley Forge Alumnae Chapter will pay tribute to the Patriots of African Descent with a wreath laying ceremony commemorating its 20th Anniversary. The Patriots of African Descent Monument, sponsored by the Valley Forge Alumnae chapter in 1993, pays tribute to the service and sacrifice African-American soldiers of the Continental Army provided to our young nation during the Valley Forge Encampment of 1777–1778 and throughout the Revolutionary War.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Valley Forge Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority for its continued efforts to honor African-American patriots who have served this country bravely and honorably.

IN RECOGNITION OF DON WOOTEN

**HON. CHERI BUSTOS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 16, 2013*

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say a few words about Don Wooten, a man I greatly admire and am honored to call a friend. Tonight, Don is being honored by Augustana College in Rock Island, his alma mater. Due to votes here in Washington, I won't be able to make it, but I want to talk about Don and what he has meant to me, and our community in Illinois.

Don is a former award-winning television reporter and producer. He has also been a teacher, a print columnist and has served on the board of numerous local and state organizations. Don went on to become a public servant, and served two terms in the Illinois State Senate. Afterward, he returned to his roots and founded WVIK radio station at Augustana College in 1980, where he still hosts two weekly radio programs at the ripe age of 85.

Don has been married for more than 50 years to Bernadette and they have 5 children and three grandchildren. As someone who spent years as a journalist herself and has now entered public service, I couldn't ask for a better role model than Don Wooten. He has influenced so many over his life and is a true community leader.

Mr. Speaker, I want to Congratulate Don, and I look forward to hearing his voice on the radio for many years to come.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE DR.  
IRENE H. BRODIE

**HON. BOBBY L. RUSH**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 16, 2013*

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a dedicated public servant from my district, The Honorable Dr. Irene H. Brodie, Mayor of the Village of Robbins. As Mayor Brodie retires after 24 years of service to the Village I wanted to take this opportunity to recognize her many achievements.

Irene Brodie began her career in Robbins as a teacher at Kellar Elementary School where she worked alongside her husband, J. Edmon Brodie, who served as the school's principal. Through her hard work and diligence she later became Assistant Principal at Turner Elementary School. In addition to her professional responsibilities, Brodie continued to be a loving and devoted wife and mother. While doing this, and in spite of her busy schedule, she earned her Doctorate in Education at Northeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Now a recognized educator in the region, Dr. Brodie joined the staff of a small junior college that, at the time, had only a few buildings to accommodate its 12,000 students. After two years of serving as a professor, Dr. Brodie became the first African-American Dean at Moraine Valley Community College. During her tenure, Moraine Valley grew to become the second largest community college in Illinois with a student population that now numbers well over 30,000.